

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9435

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 15170

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, RP

SUBJECT: LORAN A

1. AS OF DEC 27, WE DO NOT HAVE GOP ASSURANCE IT WILL PROVIDE CONTINUED RELIABLE OPERATION OF LORAN A STATIONS WITHOUT U.S. ASSISTANCE. ON CONTRARY, DISCUSSIONS WITH CAPT. VELASCO, PHILIPPINE NAVY, CLEARLY INDICATE THAT PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD DOES NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY NOW OF INDEPENDENTLY MAINTAINING LORAN A STATIONS. IF WE CONTINUE TO REQUIRE PHILIPPINE LORAN A STATIONS, U.S. COAST GUARD WILL CONSEQUENTLY BE REQUIRED AFTER DEC 31.

2. OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH LORTAD HERE INDICATE THAT CURRENT DRAWN-DOWN STRENGTH OF SEVEN OR EIGHT PERSONNEL WILL BE REQUIRED REGARDLESS OF NUMBER OF STATIONS TO BE RETAINED. IN ORDER TO GET TRAINING UNDERWAY TO FACILITATE COMPLETE AND EXCLUSIVE PHILIPPINE TAKEOVER OF OPERATION DUTIES, ONE OR TWO ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL MAY BE NEEDED. LORTAD WILL BE COMMUNICATING WITH COAST GUARD AS THESE REQUIREMENTS DEVELOP. IN MEANTIME, WE HAVE URGENT REQUIREMENT THAT COAST GUARD ISSUE NECESSARY ORDERS TO ENABLE LORTAD TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS AFTER DEC 31.

3. AT SOME POINT, WE WILL HAVE TO DEVISE SIMPLE MEANS FOR EXTENDING AGREEMENT TO ENSURE CONTINUED COVERAGE OF LORTAD
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PERSONNEL UNDER BASES AGREEMENT. WE DO NOT BELIEVE GOP WOULD

QUESTION CONTINUATION OF LORTAD OPERATION BEYOND DEC 31 FOR REASONABLE PERIOD WITHOUT FORMAL AGREEMENT BUT SOME CONTINUATION ARRANGEMENT SHOULD BE MADE WITHIN 90 DAYS OF DEC 31. IT IS ADVANTAGEIOUS NOT TO MAKE ISSUE OVER THIS PARTICULAR MATTER RIGHT NOW BECAUSE OF NEGOTIATIONS THAT GOP MAY BE CONTEMPLATING TO SECURE EXTENSIVE ASSISTANCE FROM US FOR CONTINUED EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF LORAN A STATIONS.

4. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE NOW TO STATE WITH ANY CERTAINTY HOW LONG LORTAD WILL HAVE TO REMAIN IN PHILIPPINES IN ABSENCE OF BETTER APPRECIATION OF GOP INTENTIONS. HOWEVER, WE WOULD EXPECT THAT LORTAD WOULD HAVE TO REMAIN HERE AT LEAST SIX MONTHS EVEN IF PHILIPPINES DECIDED ON URGENT BASIS TO TAKE NECESSARY STEPS TO DEVELOP CAPABILITY TO BETTER MANAGE LORAN A STATIONS. IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE PHILIPPINES IN BELIEF THAT THEY CAN AND WILL OPERATE LORAN A STATIONS, WE THINK THAT IT WOULD BE DESIREBLE NOT TO EMPHASIZE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH PHILIPPINES A PERIOD LONGER THAN SIX MONTHS.

5. ANY EFFORT TO ENSURE ASSUMPTION OF INDEPENDENT MAINTENANCE OF LORAN A STATIONS BY PHILIPPINES WILL INEVITABLY RESULT IN PHILIPPINE EFFORT TO OBTAIN ASSURANCES OF EXTENSIVE SUPPORT FROM U.S. BOOTLEG COPY OF LETTER WE HAVE BEEN SHOWN FROM PHILIPPINE NAVY TO DND RECOMMENDING NEGOTIATIONS WITH U.S. ON THIS MATTER IS BACKED UP -- WE UNDERSTAND -- BY RATHER EXTENSIVE SHOPPING LIST. IN ORDER TO RESPOND TO THESE PRESSURES WHEN AND IF THEY ARE RAISED WITH US, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO KNOW RESULTS OF JCS EVALUATION OF U.S. REQUIREMENTS FOR LORAN A STATIONS. SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, PHILIPPINES DOES NOT YET PERCEIVE A VERY EXTENSIVE REQUIREMENT FOR LORAN A STATIONS EXCEPT FOR (A) STATIONS IN BATANES AND CATANDUANES RESPONSIVE TO ICAO COMMITMENTS; (B) MORE VAGUELY STATED RECOGNITION OF IMCO AS WELL AS PHILIPPINE USE OF LORAN A STATIONS FOR NAVIGATIONAL AND WEATHER ASSISTANCE. PHILIPPINE NAVY APPARENTLY DOES NOT USE LORAN A STATIONS ALTHOUGH WE UNDERSTAND PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE DOES UTILIZE THE TWO LORAN A STATIONS IN PALAWAN FOR NAVIGATIONAL PURPOSES IN THE MINDANAO AREA.

6. IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE GOP TO DEVELOP COMMITMENT AND CAPABILITY FOR EFFICIENT OPERATON OF LORAN A STATIONS, WE
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WILL ATTEMPT TO PROMOTE AT RESPONSIBLE LEVELS OF GOP (A) RECOGNITION BORDER GOP NATIONAL INTEREST IN OPERATING STATIONS; (B) NEED TO GET LOCAL TRAINING STARTED INCLUDING ASSIGNMENT OF NECESSARY INSTRUCTORS AND STUDENTS; (C) NEED TO START MAKING REALISTIC PLANS FOR TAKING OVER LOGISTICAL SUPPLY AND SUPPORT OF STATIONS. WE ASSUME FROM STATE 228813 THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO RESPOND POSITIVELY TO PHILIPPINE REQUEST FOR HELP AND HOPEFULLY WE CAN USE OFFERS

OF SOME TANGIBLE ASSISTANCE TO EXACT FROM GOP ASSURANCES
OF STEPS WHICH WILL RESULT IN RESPONSIBLE OPERATION OF
STATIONS WITHIN SIX MONTHS TO YEAR.
SULLIVAN

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